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ESTONIAN GOVERNMENT SWORN IN. President Lennart Meri on 17 April swore in the new government of Prime Minister Tiit Vahi, BNS reported. Meri pledged his full support for the new government "which has committed itself clearly and unambiguously to the priorities of Estonia's national security--namely, the continuation of reforms and speedy integration into the European Union and European defense structures." The parliament must elect a new deputy chairman, since Edgar Savisaar vacates that post on becoming interior minister and deputy prime minister. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

LATVIAN-ESTONIAN MARITIME BORDER DISPUTE. Estonian coast guard boats on 14-15 April stopped two Latvian fishing boats near the Estonian island of Ruhnu some 2-3 nautical miles inside its 12-mile economic zone and ordered them to leave, BNS reported on 17 April. Latvia has never agreed to Estonia's unilateral demarcation in March 1993 of its maritime borders in the Bay of Riga. It argues that the borders should be set by an interstate agreement. Latvia's Fish-Farming Board senior specialist Uldis Rinkis said there have been no conflicts between Latvian and Estonian fishermen. He also noted that the number of fish caught by both countries is regulated by the International Baltic Sea Fishing Committee. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

WORLD BANK LOAN FOR LITHUANIA. The World Bank has approved an unusually flexible loan to Lithuania to help strengthen its banking system and support the development of private and newly privatized enterprises, RFE/RL reported on 14 April. The loan consists of $22 million and 4.5 million German marks ($6.3 million). Half is to be repaid in a single payment at the end of 10 years; the other half over 20 years. Sweden has agreed to provide another $10 million to increase the capital funds of commercial banks. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.